LESSON 19

TWO PEOPLE COME BEFORE GOD



Aim: **To show the children the way God wants us to come to him in prayer.**

Scripture Reading: **Luke 18:9–14**

Memory Verse: **No new memory verse**
Review the passage learnt so far.

PRESENTING THE LESSON

STARTING POINT

Choose three of the class members and prepare a little play to start the lesson. One child must be a shopkeeper and the other two customers. The customers must take turns to come to the shop and buy something. The first customer must have a proud and rude attitude, while the second one must be courteous. Let the class see clearly who receives better service from the shopkeeper.

MAIN POINTS OF THE LESSON

1. Jesus told a story about two people who also acted very differently from each other. Both went to the temple to pray. One was a Pharisee, which means he was a religious leader and respected by the people. The other was a tax collector. That was a job that often made a person an outcast in Jesus' days. It was bad enough that the tax collectors worked for the hated Roman government, but they often were dishonest and made people pay more than they had to (Lk 18:10).
2. The Pharisee stood where everyone could see him. His prayer was all about how good he was and how glad he was that he was better than others, who were greedy or dishonest or immoral. He certainly was not like that wicked tax collector over there. He boasted about all the good things he did for God. Even though God's law only asked a person to fast (go without food) once a year, he fasted twice a week (18:11–12). The Pharisee sounded as though he didn't need God at all, as if God should thank him for being so wonderful instead of the other way round!
3. The tax collector's prayer and his attitude was very different. He knew that he was a sinner coming before God, who is holy. He asked God humbly to help and save him (18:13).
   Show Picture 19. Point out once again the differences between the two men.
4. Jesus told his listeners that God heard and answered the tax collector's prayer. He went home with his sins forgiven and his relationship with God restored. The Pharisee just went home with his pride (18:14).

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Our Response to the Story

How do you behave when the headmaster comes into your classroom at school? **Give the children time to respond.** We are not proud and boastful in front of him. If we behaved like that, he would think that we never needed his help or leadership.

We could say God is like our chief, although he really is so much more. He is our Creator and loving Father, too. But we are sinners who disobey him, therefore we need to ask for God's forgiveness first of all, when we talk to him. Only when everything is put right between us, God will listen to the other things we have to say.

Proud people trust in themselves and their own abilities instead of trusting in God, like Naaman did before he was healed. **Remind the children of Naaman's story if necessary.** God will not help people who think they need no help (18:9, 14).

Instil the Memory Verse



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